

Washington
FARM FORESTRY
ASSOCIATION

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July 22, 2004

Dr. Jeff Koenings, F&W Commission
WA State Dept of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way N.
Olympia, WA 98501

Dear Dr. Koenings:


As both a small family forestland owner with ongoing and significant bear damage, and as President of our Washington Farm Forestry Association I wish to extend our appreciation for the significant improvements in the Depredation Permitting process for small landowners this spring. Although many of us are not proficient on the computer we seemed to manage the new process OK and especially appreciated the fast response getting both the initial permit and any appropriate extensions.

Sean Carrell was our primary contact and certainly deserves our heartfelt appreciation for guiding us through this expedited process. For many of us with small ownerships, the damage can be very significant in a very short period of time putting us in a near panic mode where diplomacy that's sometimes lacking on our part is especially appreciated from the Dept. Several folks mentioned they believed the response received conveyed a genuine concern for our "pain".

Additionally, some of us met with the Dept prior to starting this process for small landowners and found this to be a fruitful experience that we'd like to continue. John Broome was especially gracious and understanding of both our diversity and our concerns. Small family forestland owners tend to provide longer rotations, smaller harvests, and a genuine love of the forest and all the critters that are using our land (without significant destruction!). For the big picture of Washington's forest habitat it's important that we do what we can to keep our half of Washington's private forestland productive enough to avoid/slow the rate of conversion to non forested land uses.

We very much wish to partner with WDFW to build on what's been started to create a more positive relationship and find even more ways to maintain our viability while enhancing the public benefits we can provide.

Thanks Sean and John!


Ken Miller, President WFFA

Cc: Bruce Bjork, Chief of Enforcement

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